
Building the Positive Peace: The Urgent Need to Bring the Israeli- Palestinian Conflict Back to Basics

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It is generally accepted that the peace process, launched in 1993, went off the tracks and failed to meet the expectations of the interested parties: the state of Israel, the Palestinian Authority, and the international community.

The international discourse plays down the historical depth of the dispute and everything which pertains directly to the Jewish religious, national, and cultural heritage that dates back more than three millennia in the Land of Israel. Also absent from the international discourse is an awareness of the rich academic and theoretical foundation of knowledge with regard to peacemaking. Concepts such as the positive peace, reconciliation, "ripeness," "stable peace" or "hurting mutual stalemate" have not been integrated into the discourse.

The condition of positive peace can be created when social justice mitigates structural and cultural violence. Cultural violence occurs when the political leadership of a movement or state incorporates continuous incitement to hatred and violence into a society's public discourse. In contrast to negative peace, positive peace is not limited to the idea of getting rid of something but includes the idea of establishing something that is missing and changing the societal and political structure.

A valid discussion of reviving the peace negotiations should adopt the goal of creating the positive peace and taking the necessary intermediate steps for its implementation. Otherwise, the presence of structural violence will occasion more physical violence, and cultural violence will provide both the justification and psychological infrastructure for its continued application.

The establishment of a Palestinian state which does not comply with the spirit of positive peace increases the chances of bringing into being one more failed and warlike state that would become a destabilizing force in the region. By inciting irredentist sentiment among its own population and the Arab citizens of Israel, it will endanger

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both Israel and Jordan. Instead of concentrating on state-building, it will become a subversive political entity that will continue to wage its long-standing political and military war against Israel, the Jewish state, and its citizens.

The concept of the “Positive Peace” belongs to the rich theoretical foundation of knowledge on peacemaking. According to the literature of conflict resolution, it has four basic components:

1. Mutual acceptance/recognition and reconciliation: in our context, reciprocity in the sense of accepting the national self-determination of each party to the conflict;
2. A sense of security and respect toward each community and nation;
3. Reciprocal relations and cooperation between nations, communities, and institutions;
4. Establishing dynamic and nonviolent processes to solve disputes and settle differences.¹

Although, during the Oslo process, contemporaries did not use the language of peace studies, most of the parties concerned—with one notable exception—shared a basic vision of the type of peace the process was intended to bring about. During the early 1990s, the idea of the “Democratic Peace” held sway. Many maintained that democracies were peacefully inclined by nature, and therefore two neighboring democracies would not make war against one another. The Soviet Union had imploded not long before. A major wave of transitions to democracy in Eastern Europe took place in its stead, and it seemed that the momentum would spread to the Middle East and foster the building of civil society and the safeguarding of human rights.² Academics and politicians also remembered the European model that Jean Monnet (1888–1979) had pioneered, which involved “transforming the mutual hatred of France and Germany into a web of interdependent relationships.”³ Great optimism prevailed, and many expected that the new Palestinian entity would become the first Arab democracy possessing some of the features of modern Western society.⁴

There are different types of peace, each with its own characteristics. Alicia Cabezudo and Magnus Havelsrud explained the distinction: “Positive peace is when social justice has replaced structural violence. In contrast to negative peace, positive peace is not limited to the idea of getting rid of something, but includes the idea of establishing something that is missing. While getting rid of structural violence or social injustice, positive peace implies the presence of social justice.”⁵ Johan Galtung, who founded this school of thought, explained that conflict is comprised of a triangle: direct violence, indirect or structural violence, and cultural violence. Ending direct violence alone is not enough to bring about positive

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peace; it is necessary to bring an end to cultural and structural violence which are an integral part of the problem.⁶ It is the authors' view that positive peace is the most desirable and that the lessons of Galtung's school should be applied to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. If this is to be done, policymakers must revise their goals and accordingly decide to adopt a significantly different approach.⁷

Baruch Spinoza wrote in 1670 that "Peace is not an absence of war, it is a virtue, a state of mind, a disposition for benevolence, confidence, [and] justice."⁸ More recently, Shlomo Avineri used this benchmark when he described the cold peace with Egypt and the continuation of its state-sponsored incitement against Israel. He remarked in 2001 that "Peace is not just the absence of war."⁹

As early as 1969, Yehoshafat Harkabi, the real pioneer of the study of Arab attitudes toward Israel, identified another undesirable condition. He noted: "What they [the Arab states] want is at most an armistice, for which Israel, pressured by the big powers, will be made to pay as if for peace."¹⁰ Similarly, the approach of "fighting and negotiating" which belongs to the doctrine of People's War must be included in this group. Further, we should not overlook Chairman Arafat's own idea of peace. During a visit to Venezuela in 1980, he proclaimed: "Peace for us means the destruction of Israel. We are preparing for an all-out war, a war which will last for generations.... We shall not rest until the day when we return to our home, and until we destroy Israel.... The destruction of Israel is the goal of our struggle, and the guidelines of that struggle have remained firm since the establishment of Fatah in 1965."¹¹ None of these examples—the cold peace, a forced armistice, fighting and negotiating, or politicide—possesses the desirable qualities of positive peace.

It is generally accepted that the peace process, launched in 1993, went off the tracks and failed to meet the expectations of the interested parties: the state of Israel, the Palestinian Authority, and the international community. Recently, the Obama administration which began its second term has indicated that it plans to revive the "peace process" with new vigor. According to this wisdom, the success of this endeavor depends on fresh concessions from Israel. Indeed, the new administration has made it known that it plans to apply heavy pressure on Israel, if necessary, and for its part, the Palestinian Authority also wants the United States to apply more pressure on Israel.¹² This approach is unlikely to bring about the desired result, mainly because the premises on which it is based are not sound.

The real problem is that, long ago, the would-be peacemakers, in their haste and fear of failure, did not frame the problem correctly. They failed to ask the right question. In order to avoid disagreement, they concentrated on process and postponed the substantive issues of content. They hoped that the dynamic of congenial negotiations would facilitate a favorable outcome. By taking refuge in process and hoping to keep the negotiations "on track,"¹³ they neglected the real goal: building a stable and sustainable peace, or positive peace. The implementation of a lasting

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agreement requires an understanding of the nature of violence and its structural and cultural components. It follows that an effective approach necessitates the creation of the right climate by educating each population for the desired transition to positive peace and reshaping the hierarchy of values to conform to this goal.

Every state has an interest in the type of neighbors it has. Sir Robert Francis Cooper, a senior British diplomat and adviser, noted that this is a legitimate concern for the postmodern or established states. He observed: "The pre-modern world is a world of failed states. Here the state no longer fulfills Weber's criterion of having the monopoly on the legitimate use of force. Either it lost the legitimacy, or it has lost the monopoly of the use of force; often the two go together.... In such areas chaos and war is a way of life. In so far as there is a government, it operates in a way similar to an organized crime syndicate."¹⁴ Cooper stated that it is the legitimate interest of the established postmodern states to act in self-defense, because instability in one's neighborhood poses threats that no state can ignore.¹⁵

The idea of positive peace is easy to grasp, simple, and fair. A valid discussion of reviving the peacemaking negotiations should focus primarily on creating positive peace and taking the intermediate steps toward its implementation. It was understood that to achieve the benefits of real peace each side would have to make sacrifices, and each undertook to prepare its respective public for this eventuality. It is also the responsibility of all of the parties, including the international community, to make their fair contribution toward this goal. Unless the terms of reference and framing of the problem are revised in this sense, the Israeli-Palestinian conflict will remain intractable. Structural violence will continue to motivate more violence, and cultural violence will provide both the justification and the psychological infrastructure for its application.

THE IMPORTANCE OF CULTURAL DISCOURSE

The efforts of the international community to revive the political process by renewing direct negotiations between Israel and the Palestinians have intentionally overlooked the existence and importance of the cultural-religious and historical dimensions which, over time, have become part of the Palestinian structure of governance. The international discourse plays down the religious, cultural, and historical depth of the dispute and everything which pertains directly to the Jewish national and cultural heritage dating back more than three millennia in the Land of Israel. Also absent from the international discourse in most cases is an awareness of the rich academic and theoretical foundation of knowledge with regard to peacemaking. Concepts such as positive peace, reconciliation, "ripeness," "stable peace," or "hurting mutual stalemate" have not been integrated into the discourse. This omission also characterizes the approach to the concept of justice,

the significance of protected values,¹⁶ and to the consequences and implications of cultural differences.

Even worse, the international discussion is characterized by a clear asymmetry of perception which dates from the beginning of the peace process. At that time, the United States assumed the role of a proactive mediator which did not demand compliance on the part of both sides. As Natan Sharansky describes, the United States wanted to “strengthen Arafat” and particularly in the case of incitement systematically looked the other way, an issue which he raised directly in a face-to-face conversation with President Clinton.¹⁷ For their part, Israeli policymakers did not insist on Israel’s legal and historical rights thus placing the country at a disadvantage and compromising its position.¹⁸ On the one hand, there is a suspicious attitude toward Israel’s demand for Palestinian recognition of the Jewish state as the national state of the Jewish people. This is taken as a spiteful and ungracious Israeli effort to get out of the political process and the direct negotiations with the Palestinians. On the other, there has been a nearly total avoidance of every aspect relating to the essential historical narrative, value system, ideology, and religion which form the foundation of the Palestinian position.

Further, the international community, together with intellectuals and opinion makers in the West and in Israel, have been irrationally predisposed to display a combination of patronizing views and even arrogance toward the Palestinians. Patronization takes the form of ignoring explicit statements of the Palestinian leaders which would weaken or ruin the Palestinian claim and may be interpreted as a refusal to accept the principle of recognition of the Jewish nation-state. One such example was Yasir Arafat’s speech of May 10, 1994, in a Johannesburg mosque, where he called for a jihad to liberate Jerusalem and publicly declared that he had entered into the Oslo agreements in bad faith.¹⁹ The tendency is to downplay and ignore such statements and to produce rationalizations regarding the internal Palestinian discourse or the internal political constraints, by interpreting some of them incorrectly and removing such evidence from its historical and cultural context. Such attitudes reflect “the soft bigotry of low expectations.”²⁰

One must ask what to make of the commentary on Palestinian television after it had been ordered to convey the Palestinian president, Mahmoud Abbas’ (Abu Mazen) directive to make a Palestinian contribution to the efforts to extinguish the major fire in the Carmel Forest (December 2010):

Our human history shows that we have not lingered [dithered] in carrying out our humanitarian obligation, just as the [Muslim] leader Saladin [who conquered Jerusalem] sent his physician to treat his enemy, Richard the Lion Hearted, who led the invasion of our land and conquered it.²¹

How exactly should we interpret this historical analogy and what really was Abbas’

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intended message for the Palestinian public? According to our understanding, this statement reflects the Palestinian hegemonic narrative which refuses to view the state of Israel as a legitimate entity in the region. From the Palestinian point of view, Israel's existence is the same as the Crusader Kingdom which imposed itself on a place where it did not belong and which did not stand the test of time and Islamic heroism. This faulty comparison is deeply anchored in the Palestinian narrative, in its religious and ideological tradition of revolutionary politics.²²

The late Robert Tucker, the distinguished Sovietologist, described a movement such as the PLO as a "revolutionary mass movement under single-party auspices" or simply a "movement regime."²³ Abu Mazen was one of the authors and spiritual fathers of this ideology, which dates back to the founding in Cairo of the Palestine Liberation Organization in January 1964, three full years before the Six Day War, at a time when Israel lived within the 1949 armistice lines. In the days of Ahmad Shukeiri, the PLO was refreshingly frank in stating its goals. It called for the destruction of Israel and "driving the Jews into the sea."

Writing in 1969, Harkabi explained that according to the religious and ideological worldview of this revolutionary mass movement, the Jews are not a nation and thus have no claim to national self-determination:

The conception that the Jews do not constitute a national entity is a vital principle for the Arab position. For if the Israelis do constitute a nation, then they have the right of self-determination, and the claim that only the Palestinian Arabs have the right of self-determination, and that only they must decide the national character of the country, is invalid. Moreover, the Arab claim for exclusive national self-determination appears in all its starkness as chauvinism that demands rights for itself which are denied to the other.²⁴

Writing in 1975, Bernard Lewis observed:

The PLO in its literature never uses the expression "Arabs and Jews," for to do so would be to admit the existence of a Jewish nation and it is cardinal to the PLO ideology that there is no such thing. The formula which they use is "Muslims, Christians and Jews." The Jews, in their view, are purely a religious minority who possess no separate national identity and have no right to a separate state....²⁵

Thus, the principle of Palestinian nonrecognition has become the anchor of asymmetry, which creates a reality of a temporary and provisional acceptance of a political *fait accompli* whose name is the State of Israel, but negates the possibility

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of a positive and stable peace based on mutual recognition of the right of self-determination and reconciliation.

Such views even antedate the founding of the PLO. Harkabi described the Arab objection as follows:

The Arabs emphasize that they seek a “just solution” or a “just peace,” which constitutes the opposite pole to a peace solution founded on the status quo, on the fact of Israel’s existence. The just solution, according to this view, is the annulment of the wrong involved in the very existence of Israel and the restoration of Israel to its legal owners. Justice is a denial of Israel’s existence.

Thus Nasser says, “We talk peace, but we do not accept peace that is based on the usurpation of rights and on the *fait accompli*. That is why we work for peace based on justice.” (speech at Alexandria University, July 28, 1963)²⁶

The Palestinians may be able recognize Israel’s existence *de facto* but they cannot recognize the legitimacy of its establishment *de jure*.²⁷ This analysis, published decades ago, remains valid. The problem is that the Palestinians have neither moved with the times nor have they revised their ideology. They have retained their positions intact, and as we shall observe in the following section, at the Sixth Council of Fatah in Bethlehem in 2009, they reaffirmed their commitment to Articles 9 and 22 of the Palestine National Charter (adopted in 1964 and amended in 1968), justifying the armed struggle and condemning Zionism by linking it with fascism. This position reflects the stubborn refusal to recognize the state of Israel as the national state of the Jewish people and, making use of the slogans of Soviet Cold War propaganda,²⁸ glorifies the struggle against its very existence. Further, the Palestine National Charter remains in force and is posted in its full version on official PLO and PA websites,²⁹ despite the fact that, in 1998, Arafat and the Palestinian leadership announced that a special committee would make the necessary amendments in the charter to ensure its compliance with the Oslo agreements and their recognition of Israel.³⁰

It is against this background that Mahmoud Abbas’s contemptuous words should be understood: “The Jewish state. What is a Jewish state? We say, ‘The state of Israel.’ You may call yourselves whatever you wish.... But I shall not accept it.... It is not my job ...to give a definition to the state and what is in it. Call yourselves [he stammers] the ‘Zionist, Hebrew, National, Socialist Republic,’ call it whatever you wish! I do not care!”³¹

Over the years the Palestinians have repackaged their militant and revolutionary refusal into the form of sophisticated and “light” diplomatic slogans so as to mask their real intentions and mislead the international community, even if they

knew it was not sincere. During the early 1970s, the leadership of the PLO had lost the support of world public opinion because of “rabid statements concerning the slaughter of Jews.”³² At the time, the PLO leadership became so concerned that they had become known as terrorists that they searched for ways to improve their image. Consequently, in 1970, they sent a delegation led by Abu Iyad (Salah Khalaf) to North Vietnam to seek advice. During their two-week visit, the North Vietnamese counseled the PLO to employ strategic deception, concealing their real purpose but working for their goals in phases, while giving the appearance of moderation.³³ “The Vietnamese suggested that seemingly accepting ‘the division of the land between two independent states,’ without stressing that this was only an interim phase, would neutralize the PLO’s opponents in the West.”³⁴ Subsequently, in 1974, they adopted the Strategy of Stages or of “Phased Goals.”

According to this doctrine, the PLO “would take hold of any territory relinquished by Israel—as a result of diplomatic pressure, terrorism, or a combination of both—and use it as a launching pad for the next round of fighting.”³⁵ At its meeting in Cairo in the first week of June 1974, the Palestine National Council adopted these resolutions. Bernard Lewis explained: “These [resolutions] make it clear that the PLO was not prepared to renounce any of its maximalist positions, that it would regard any such state merely as a first step toward its ultimate aim of an all-Palestine state, and the struggle to attain this end would continue.”³⁶

In this perspective, it is necessary to understand the absolute centrality of the fourth dimension—time—in Palestinian strategic thinking. The amount of time which the Palestinians are prepared to spend in order to achieve their goals is infinite. It is within this framework, even over generations, that one may appreciate the true intent of Arafat and Fatah, particularly the second part of his 1980 declaration cited above: “Peace for us means the destruction of Israel. We are preparing for an all-out war, a war which will last for generations”

Resorting to the sophisticated use of code words, the Palestinians adopted the slogan of the “two-state solution.” They had previously used it in their own war against South Vietnam. It lulled the ear of the international community, which interpreted it to mean that the Palestinians really would be willing to end the conflict for all time according to a formula that would produce two genuinely independent states: a Palestinian state and the state of Israel, the national state of the Jewish people. Writing in 1993, Mordechai Nisan analyzed exactly what the Palestinians mean by this term:

What is particularly intriguing about the comparative Vietnam-Palestine analogy revolves around the fact that in both cases it was feasible to talk about *the two-staged two-state in one-country* dynamic. Vietnam was a country divided into two states until the revolutionary revisionist one overwhelmed the illegitimate, status quo, Western-reliant one. The

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PLO vision revolved about the dynamic process whereby, once a PLO Arab state would arise in part of divided Palestine, it would over time overwhelm the illegitimate, status quo, Western-reliant one. Israel's fate would be as politically terminal as had been that of Vietnam.³⁷

The Vietnamese model has retained its attraction for the Palestinians. For example, in April 2004, PLO official Farouk Kaddoumi commented on Ariel Sharon's plan to withdraw from the Gaza Strip: "Let the Gaza Strip be South Vietnam. We will use all available methods to liberate North Vietnam [*sic*]."³⁸ Indeed, the two-state slogan is still current; Abu Mazen used it recently in his speech to the UN General Assembly on November 29, 2012.³⁹

The positions described above reflect "the persistence and continuity of the Arab argumentation on this question."⁴⁰ They reveal that the commitments of the Oslo agreements did not result in a substantive change in Palestinian ideology and goals. They were neither reflected in their educational system⁴¹ nor in the public media under their control. One may conclude that the Palestinian view of Israel and their idea of justice are knowable and predictable. There are few new beginnings in human experience. When it comes to history, continuity is usually the rule.

THE MAJOR IMPEDIMENT TO SETTLING THE ISRAEL-PALESTINE CONFLICT AND THE PROBLEM OF INDIRECT VIOLENCE

All efforts to evade an in-depth discussion of the impediments to settling the conflict run the danger of bringing both sides back to the cycle of violence. It has been the accepted practice to classify these "barriers"—to use the term of Yaacov Bar-Siman-Tov—into three categories: strategic, structural, and psychological.⁴² This division, however, entails a certain artificiality because within every type of barrier, one may discern some characteristics of the other categories. (One could equally apply Johan Galtung's classifications to good advantage, because they include indirect or structural violence and cultural violence, which are intercorrelated.) It would be more correct, however, first to recognize the main strategic barrier and, in this perspective, to appreciate its components in their multidimensionality and reciprocal relationships. The main barrier to peace is the existential objection to the state of Israel as a Jewish state, which provides the guiding principle of the Palestinian strategy.

This principle has been integrated into the structure and institutions of the Palestinian Authority, particularly its media and educational system. It has fostered an atmosphere of violence, the teaching of hate, and counter-indoctrination with regard to peace and coexistence with Israel.⁴³ According to the Palestinian narrative, as voiced by Abu Mazen to the United Nations, an "unprecedented

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historical injustice” had been inflicted on the Palestinian people. If we apply the analytical methods of classical political thought, we may note that the goal and purpose of this regime is to undo that injustice by every possible means including war. Once we recognize this basic fact, we can understand the purpose and significance of indirect violence—structural, cultural, and religious. It is clear in this context that the mere absence of violence cannot result in true peace, because all the institutions of Palestinian society—such as it is—are mobilized for resistance against Israel.

Palestinian recognition of the state of Israel, which in their view is not a national-ethnic entity, represents the second side of the pragmatic and temporary character of the Palestinian accommodation to the reality of the state of Israel in the region. The various Palestinian factions regard the PLO as the leading organization, but in an absurd manner, its positions do not obligate them. It is fitting in this context to cite the public statement of Muhammad Dahlan, one of the prominent leaders of Fatah, who enthusiastically explained that there is no difference between Hamas and Fatah and that he never demanded that Hamas recognize Israel. According to Dahlan, Fatah itself had never actually recognized Israel and never would. Because of the practical need to obtain funding and other benefits Fatah and the Palestinian Authority have recognized Israel, but nothing in this recognition obligates the other factions of this organization.⁴⁴

It is not generally known that Israel’s demand that the Palestinian Authority recognize Israel as the Jewish state has resulted in a major ideological challenge. Evidently, this demand has cultural and religious ramifications. As mentioned above, there is a basic rejection of the reality that Judaism, beyond being a religion, is the faith of a people who possess the right to self-determination. The extensive discussion of Palestinian ideologues, such as Abu Mazen, Saeb Erekat, Yasser Abed Rabbo, and Nabil Shaath, reveals their views and fears—real and imagined—about the implications of this idea. Their internal discourse reflects a good measure of alarm and the projection of their own behavior on the Israelis. Beyond the complete rejection of Jewish nationhood is the fear that recognition of this reality could result in the disfranchisement and possibly the “transfer” of the one-and-a-half-million Arabs, the “1948 Arabs,” living within the state of Israel. (Following this line of thought, one should ask conversely what would be the fate of Israelis who could one day find themselves living under Palestinian sovereignty.) Here, Palestinian refusal to recognize Jewish nationhood constitutes a barrier to achieving a positive peace. What is shocking is the depth and breadth of this discussion and the complication which the Palestinians have added. The following is an excerpt from Abu Mazen’s address of May 28, 2011, to the Oversight Committee of the Arab League:

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An additional subject which they [the Israelis] have begun to speak about over the last year or two is recognition as a Jewish state or of the Jewishness of the state of Israel.

Naturally, we rejected this and we will continue to reject statements of this type. We told them that they can go to the United Nations and raise whatever they wish, but we for our part do not see it as our obligation or business, or task to determine what is the nature of the state [Israel] and what is its nationality.

But we know very well what is Netanyahu's purpose in raising this subject. It is clear that:

- He wishes to destabilize the presence of the Arabs in Israel;
- He desires to prevent completely the right of return for every Palestinian individual to the state of Israel.

It is for these two reasons that Netanyahu began to speak about a Jewish state.

Accordingly, these words [i.e., everything he said] to Congress and AIPAC destroyed everything. They removed any basis for negotiations. On what basis can we talk?⁴⁵

The unwillingness to recognize the state of the Jewish people and a consensus about the need to continue the struggle form the real, shared ideological justification for their strategic goal. There are no differences of opinion about the Palestinians' right to the violent struggle including terror and its basic justice. At the same time, the organizations differ—albeit only slightly—about the right time to renew the violent struggle.

It is noteworthy that even after nineteen years of the political process (and forty-five years since the first publication of the original Palestine National Charter in 1964), the Sixth Council of Fatah, which convened in Bethlehem with great fanfare in August 2009, and the generous facilitation of the state of Israel, did not lead to the abandonment of the ideological and militant steadfastness which has characterized Fatah as a revolutionary movement committed to violent struggle. The Sixth Council adopted and reaffirmed the Palestine National Charter with all of its components. Among these was Article 9, which calls for the continuation of the violent struggle against the Zionist-colonial entity until its ultimate destruction:

Armed struggle is the only way of liberating Palestine, and is thus strategic, not tactical. The Palestinian Arab people hereby affirm their unwavering determination to carry on the armed struggle and to press on towards popular revolution for the liberation of and return to their homeland.⁴⁶

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The Palestinian ethos of resistance is reinforced by expressions of incitement and hatred toward Israel, and in the call to violence, whose purpose is the liberation of all of Palestine from the hands of the foreign Zionist occupation. The following is the text of Article 22 of the same Palestine National Charter, which (in 2009) the Sixth Council of Fatah reaffirmed:

Zionism is a political movement that is organically linked with world imperialism, and is opposed to all liberation movements or movements for progress in the world. The Zionist movement is essentially fanatical and racist; its objectives involve aggression, expansion and the establishment of colonial settlements, and its methods are those of Fascists and Nazis. Israel acts as the cat's paw for the Zionist movement, a geographic and manpower base for world imperialism and a springboard for its thrust into the Arab homeland to frustrate the aspirations of the Arab nation to liberation, unity and progress. Israel is a constant threat to peace in the Middle East and the whole world....⁴⁷

According to Harkabi's analysis, this article makes "the claim that the hostility of Zionism is directed not only against the Arabs but against all that is good in the world.... Thus, warfare against Israel is elevated from an Arab interest to a universal humanistic mission."⁴⁸

Such ideological positions permeate the Palestinian narrative and ethos and are hammered into the Palestinian public consciousness with all means at the disposal of the PA: mass communications media, be they official, public, and private. They are also transmitted to the younger generation by means of the Palestinian educational apparatus. After examining a sample of 117 Palestinian textbooks, IMPACT-SE, a research organization which specializes in the study of textbooks and employs the UNESCO guidelines and standards, reported its findings in 2011:

The general trend of the findings is a combination of complete disregard of Jews' rights, and a near complete disregard of Israel's existence. Alongside denial our monitoring also detected a substantial degree of demonizing Jews and Israel, while preparing for a violent struggle and completely ignoring tolerance, reconciliation and peace. While the textbooks do not include calls to apply violence against Israel and the Jews, they are alarmingly rife with Jihadi and Martyrdom vocabulary, Israel remains illegitimate, all its territory is seen by PA textbooks as 1948 occupied Palestinian lands.⁴⁹

The authors of this report identify four consistent themes in the school textbooks published by the Palestinian Authority: 1) rejection of Jews' rights and Israel's

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existence; 2) demonization of both Jews and Israel; 3) slanting of the Arab-Israeli conflict; and 4) instead of advocating tolerance and peace, encouraging of martyrdom and violent struggle.⁵⁰ The delegitimization and demonization of the Israeli side and preparation for the coming struggle go hand in hand with the avoidance of peace with Israel as a goal. In fact, past agreements are explicitly interpreted as a form of Israel's weakness which brought one-sided gains for the Palestinians. It is evident that such concessions did not bring about "strategic learning" (i.e., the changing of goals) for the Palestinian political and intellectual leadership or any other positive change. This literature provides an egregious example of "indirect violence," as described above, in the form of cultural violence which provides the justification and psychological infrastructure for open violence. One must recognize the true danger entailed by this incitement and hate-targeting.

An additional theme is principally identified with PA Prime Minister Salam Fayyad, who is regarded as a man of Western culture who brings a new message to a Palestine riddled with corruption. He is thought to represent an alternative to the prevailing Palestinian political and national culture. The centrality of Fayyad and his international standing warrant a careful analysis of his plan.

THE FAYYAD PLAN

Palestinian Prime Minister Fayyad's plan, "Ending the Occupation, Establishing the State," which was first published in August 2009, seeks to build the capacity and foundations for a Palestinian state and is characterized by a type of political pragmatism which the international community enthusiastically supports. Indeed, Fayyad has received the support of the Western world and broad international backing for his plan to build the Palestinian state and to secure recognition of such an entity within the 1967 borders.

The Fayyad plan is an impressive document which reflects the spirit of the era and displays sophisticated use of the basic concepts of the international discourse, with an emphasis on the realization of human rights. This manifesto embodies the ethos of the struggle against Israel. Except for one or two mentions of the idea of two states—and not two nation-states—and occasional lone references to the explicit name of Israel, the state of Israel is absent from the document and definitely from its spirit.⁵¹

It should be noted that Fayyad's position—widely considered relatively moderate, at least by the international community—did not win wide support among the Palestinian public. Fayyad lacks political standing and power. He is even considered an internal enemy of the PA leadership and mainly of the Fatah movement. They are even working to limit his freedom and remove him from the centers of influence. Fayyad's policies and positions represent a sense of statesmanlike

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responsibility which his adversaries interpret as the antithesis of and even a real threat to the revolutionary worldview that they represent—a worldview whose values and practices are in complete contradiction to those associated with a responsible state in the international community. Fayyad has managed to retain his position for years because his adversaries recognize the importance of his presence. (At the time of this writing, Salam Fayyad has tendered his resignation, which Abu Mazen has accepted. For the present, it appears that Fayyad will continue to serve as a caretaker.)⁵² For the international community, his role is an indispensable condition for continuing the financial aid without which the Palestinian Authority could not go on.

The essence of Fayyad's strategy is to create a framework for unilateral steps whose goal is to secure international recognition of a Palestinian state, even if it would not come into being within a mutually acceptable legal framework. The purpose of this plan is to obviate the political price of a peace agreement which would be acceptable to Israel, namely, recognizing the state of Israel as the homeland of the Jewish people and declaring the end of the conflict and an end to new demands. Thus, the Palestinian strategic goal is to gain independence in the sense of ending the "occupation" (although not necessarily the independent governance of a state and all that is associated with it) and exercising Palestinian sovereignty in Judea and Samaria with the support of the international community, which would recognize a Palestinian state within the pre-1967 borders.

Clearly there are important ideas in this document which legitimately form part of the process of establishing the Palestinian state. The document's basic problem, however, is its attempt to give this initiative ideological weight, integrate it with the ethos of the Palestinian struggle, and make it the cornerstone of the unilateral strategy which guides the Palestinian leadership. This strategy effectively has become a major barrier to resolving the conflict, because its successful realization would destroy the very idea of two independent states as the guiding principle of a genuine peace agreement.

THE DUALITY OF THE CURRENT PALESTINIAN STRATEGY

An examination of Fayyad's positions shows a consistent pattern of duality, if not duplicity. There is strong emphasis on the importance of establishing a Palestinian state and its institutions together with the continuation of struggle and resistance. The identity of the Palestinian state and the justice of its establishment are emphasized along with the negation and delegitimization of Israel. The document rejects any Jewish attachment to the land and to Jerusalem, which is described as a city of Arab-Palestinian heritage to which Christians and Muslims

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have a genuine cultural and religious attachment (and which Israel has forcibly occupied).

The document makes careful use of formulations that have double meanings.⁵³ On the one hand, some convey messages which may be viewed as legitimate and are drafted in terms of concepts from the current discourse and related to international law. On the other, there are messages calling for resistance and struggle, which in turn foster an ethos and consciousness that does not permit the opening of hearts to the culture of peace. The adjective “Israeli” has negative connotations and is linked to all manner of evil and crimes against the Palestinian people. Israel is described as a brutal and cruel entity which harms the Palestinians and negates freedom of religion and the Islamic and Christian religions specifically.

Palestinian adoption of the logic of unilateralism is designed to open a convenient escape route from a return to the direct-negotiations track by demanding that Israel freeze building and development of the settlements and in East Jerusalem. Abu Mazen and the Palestinian leadership refuse to resume direct negotiations with Israel because it would change the Palestinian narrative and jeopardize its fulfillment regarding the issues of refugees, Jerusalem, and security arrangements.

The strategy of violent struggle has guided Fatah since its establishment and played a major role even throughout the Oslo process. Arafat gambled on the dual strategy of negotiations combined with terror.⁵⁴ With his failure, and despite six years of the Second Armed Uprising (Intifada), Abu Mazen has resorted to the dual strategy of negotiation combined with popular resistance, while concurrently insisting that the use of violence does not serve Palestinian interests. While some have welcomed this change, it is important to point out that Abu Mazen never rejected the use of violence nor has he defined terror as immoral or illegitimate. He has been careful to state publicly that terror and violence do not serve the Palestinians at present, which means that under a change of circumstances it would be possible to resume the use of armed force.

On the subject of violence, one may note Nabil Shaath’s speech of November 22, 2012. Shaath is responsible for the Palestinian Authority’s external relations, and Abu Mazen sent him to Gaza to address a Hamas rally on his behalf. There, he openly praised the struggle and resistance in all its forms, including the armed struggle. One may assume that both Fatah and Abu Mazen supported Shaath’s choice of words. This was not the first time Abu Mazen has conveyed such messages via emissaries and in a way that enables him to maintain deniability. The following is an excerpt from Nabil Shaath’s address:

The battle that you are waging has been going on for a hundred years. This people has been fighting for a hundred years to liberate its land, and to liberate Jerusalem. When you shout out that you are marching toward

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Jerusalem—well, this is exactly what your victory is doing. It is defending Jerusalem and Palestine in its entirety, by all means of resistance—by armed resistance, by political resistance, by going to the U.N., by solidarity—by all forms of confrontation with the enemy occupying our land.⁵⁵

It is doubtful whether a Palestinian document, official or otherwise, may be found which clearly lays out the guidelines of the Palestinian national strategy and its principle of organization.⁵⁶ Nevertheless, it is clear that the Palestinian strategy rests on the unproven assumption of the international community that the Israeli-Palestinian conflict is the key to security in the region, stability throughout the Middle East, and even a lull in the confrontation between Islamic fundamentalism and the West. Saeb Erekat articulated this way of thinking, which identifies the Israeli-Palestinian conflict as the major issue in the region: “The question of Palestine constitutes a hub for ongoing interplays in our region through hegemony, blackmail or control. This will not be realized without the Palestinian question [*sic*].⁵⁷”

Although Erekat does not express this idea explicitly, it may be found in Abbas’ speech to the UN General Assembly of November 29, 2012. Here, he made the case for granting the Palestinian Authority the status of a nonmember observer state at the United Nations. It is symbolically important that he chose November 29 as the date for this speech, the anniversary of UN recognition of the Jewish state in 1948.

Abbas attempted to project the image of a future head of state, but on close examination, his message is bellicose, emotionally charged, and misleading. He portrayed the Palestinians as the innocent victims of an “unprecedented historical injustice.” He also declared that the international community stands before the “last chance for the two-state solution,” of course without defining precisely what he meant by the term. He also called for a “just peace,” again without defining what he meant. It would be helpful if he would explain precisely what he had in mind.

Abbas presented Israel as a systematic abuser of human rights and of the rights of minorities which, with a brutal foot, crushes the rights of the Palestinian national minority in the Land of Israel. Basically, he presented the Palestinian people as the innocent victim of Israel’s colonial occupation, “which institutionalizes the plague of racism and entrenches hatred and incitement.”⁵⁸

Abbas’ choice of language and slogans comes directly from the Soviet lexicon of the Cold War.⁵⁹ Among the terms he used were: “racist colonial occupation,” “ethnic cleansing,” “aggression and occupation.” Arafat used the same terms in his UN address of November 1974, and this may have served as Abbas’ model. Abbas also stated:

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Yet, we must repeat here once again our warning: the window of opportunity is narrowing and time is quickly running out. The rope of patience is shortening and hope is withering. The innocent lives that have been taken by Israeli bombs...are a painful reminder to the world that this racist, colonial occupation is making the two-state solution and the prospect for realizing peace a very difficult choice, if not impossible.

The times have changed, and the leadership of the PLO now wear suits, but this message is reminiscent of the words of Arafat: "Today I have come bearing an olive branch and a freedom fighter's gun. Do not let the olive branch fall from my hand. I repeat: do not let the olive branch fall from my hand."⁶⁰ The language may be different, but the message is the same.

The present Palestinian strategy is based on the coordination of several proactive methods: an international effort to create a hostile climate toward Israel while simultaneously launching unilateral initiatives in order to avoid serious negotiations. By delegitimizing Israel and presenting it as a leper and a war criminal which opposes peace and preemptorily prevents the rise of a Palestinian state, the Palestinian strategy is to promote a process which will eventually result in a Security Council decision that is favorable to their cause. A parallel move is the Palestinians' attempt to aggravate the tensions between Israel and the United States so as to spread the idea that Israel is not a strategic asset but a burden. Domestically, the PA leadership has nurtured the Palestinian resistance ethos, devoting systematic efforts to shaping and preserving the consciousness of the struggle. They have fostered an atmosphere of violence and the teaching of hate, while promoting counter-indoctrination about peace and coexistence with Israel.

POSITIVE PEACE AS THE OPTIMAL SOLUTION OF THE CONFLICT: WHY ISRAEL SHOULD NOT ACCEPT ANYTHING LESS

The state of Israel cannot agree to the establishment of a neighboring Palestinian state which is not committed to positive peace with its four basic components (as specified at the beginning of this article). The establishment of a Palestinian state which does not fit into the framework and spirit of positive peace increases the chances of creating a failed and hostile state which would destabilize the security of the region and become an irredentist danger both for Israel and Jordan. Instead of concentrating on state building, it would become a strategic enclave facilitating the political and military struggle as was the case of Cambodia during the war in Vietnam.

Only the creation of a state committed to positive peace can prevent the eventuality of a subversive political entity which would act to incite irredentist

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sentiment among the Arab citizens of Israel. Some members of this population group define themselves as part of the Palestinian people and collaborate with parts of the intellectual, religious, and political elites which systematically work to destabilize the Zionist political model of the state of Israel, endeavoring to bring about its demise by constantly exploiting and leveraging the efforts at delegitimization of Israel as the Jewish nation-state.

Israel has a vital interest in the type of neighbor it will have. From its perspective, the political process must be conducted parallel to the process of building the Palestinian state and must rest on three principles:

- 1) Two nation-states: Palestine as the nation-state of the Palestinian people and Israel as the nation-state of the Jewish people
- 2) Rehabilitation of the Palestinian refugees outside of Israel
- 3) Obligatory security arrangements aimed at assuring Israel's security.

From Israel's point of view, a viable Palestinian state should be capable of asserting its effective sovereignty by means of a legitimate central government and should be free of subversion which would threaten its very existence. A viable Palestinian state must exercise its authority over its citizens in a legal and responsible manner and: 1) assure the monopoly on the use of force; 2) provide for the wellbeing and security of the population to which it is responsible by means of state institutions, effective governance, assuring law and order, and capable economic management; and 3) fulfill its obligations toward its neighbors in conformance with international law and thus assure regional security.

The time has come for the international community to accept the obligation of supporting positive peace. That means applying the same standards to both sides; repudiating terror, declaring it immoral, and refusing outright to accord legitimacy to terrorist movements; and most importantly, obliging the Palestinians to cultivate the right atmosphere by developing a cultural infrastructure compatible with peace and educating its people toward this end.

These requirements are reasonable and modest, but in order to conduct negotiations that will result in the conclusion of the conflict and a stable peace—not just an armistice or the absence of war—it is necessary to go back to the basics. The Palestinians must publicly and irrevocably drop the malicious proposition that peace and justice entail the liquidation of Israel. Without a clearly stated and fundamental change of their strategic goal, the peace negotiations cannot result in peace. This is the *sine qua non*.

Mistakes have been made, and the hour is late. All parties concerned including the international community must adopt the positive peace as the true goal of meaningful negotiations and strive for “a disposition for benevolence, confidence, [and] justice.”

NOTES

- * The authors acknowledge the assistance of Ido Mizrahi of the Department of Strategic Affairs of the Prime Minister's Office. He kindly made a number of significant documents available for the preparation of this article.
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Louis Kriesberg, "The Development of the Conflict Resolution Field," in I. William Zartman, ed., *Peacemaking in International Conflict: Methods and Techniques*, rev. ed. (Washington: U.S. Institute of Peace Press, 2007).
I. William Zartman, "Ripeness: The Hurting Stalemate and Beyond," in Paul C. Stern and Daniel Druckman, eds., *International Conflict Resolution after the Cold War* (Washington: National Academy Press, 2000), 225–250.
Yaacov Bar-Siman-Tov, "Adaptation and Learning in Conflict Management, Reduction and Resolution," *International Journal of Peace Studies* 18 (2003): 19–37.
Herbert C. Kelman, "Social-Psychological Dimensions of International Conflict," in I. W. Zartman ed., *Peacemaking in International Conflict: Methods and Techniques* (Washington, DC: U.S. Institute of Peace, 2007), 61–107.
 2. Samuel Huntington, *The Third Wave: Democratization in the Late Twentieth Century* (Norman, OK: University of Oklahoma Press, 1991). Huntington termed the worldwide reinstatement of democracy the "Third Wave."
 3. David Makovsky, *Making Peace with the PLO: The Rabin Government's Road to the Oslo Accord* (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1996), 15.
 4. In *Ivory Towers on Sand*, Martin Kramer pointed out that the "Palestinian exception" was one of the paradigms which then prevailed in American academic circles. The Palestinians "were believed to have a vibrant 'civil society,' both inside and outside Palestine. They had representative institutions, unions, and associations. Their leaders were accountable. Allow them self-rule, and the Palestinians would prove that the Arab world could sustain democracy." Martin Kramer, *Ivory Towers on Sand* (Washington, DC: Washington Institute for Near East Policy, 2001), 70, as quoted by Joel Fishman, "The Broken Promise of the Democratic Peace: Israel and the Palestinian Authority," *Jerusalem Viewpoints*, No. 477, Jerusalem Center for Public Affairs, May 1, 2002, <http://www.jcpa.org/jl/vp477.htm>.
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 6. See the description of the nature and characteristics of cultural and structural violence and the need to tackle all dimensions of violence in Ramsbotham, Woodhouse, and Miall, *Contemporary Conflict Resolution*, 10.
 7. A definition of first- and second-order change may be found in "Leadership and Institutional Change," National Academy for Academic Leadership, <http://www.thenationalacademy.org/ready/change.html>.
 8. *Theological-Political Treatise*, 1670.
 9. *Jerusalem Post*, November 23, 2001.

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10. Yehoshafat Harkabi, "The Arab-Israel Conflict" (1969), in Yehoshafat Harkabi, ed., *Palestinians and Israel* (Jerusalem: Israel Universities Press/Keter, 1974), 19. The idea of forcing Israel to accept an armistice in exchange for major withdrawals was the basis of the ill-fated Rogers Plan (June 1970). Harkabi wrote the seminal study *Arab Attitudes to Israel* (Jerusalem: Keter, 1972).
11. *El Mundo* (Caracas), February 11, 1980, as cited by Robert Wistrich, *A Lethal Obsession* (New York: Random House, 2010), 703 and 1080, n. 58.
12. Khaled Abu Toameh, "Palestinians Plan Violence to Force the US to Extract Concessions from Israel," posted February 22, 2013, <http://www.gatestoneinstitute.org/3598/palestinians-plan-violence>.
13. Natan Sharansky with Ron Dermer, *The Case for Democracy* (New York: Public Affairs, 2004), 151.
14. *Observer*, April 7, 2002, as quoted by Joel Fishman, "Broken Promise." See also Robert Cooper, *The Post-Modern State and the World Order* (London: Demos Publications, 2000), <http://www.demos.co.uk/publications/thepostmodernstate>.
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16. For further reading on this concept, see Shiri Landman, "Barriers to Peace: Protected Values in the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict," in Yaacov Bar Siman-Tov, ed., *Barriers to Peace in the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict* (Jerusalem: Jerusalem Institute for Israel Studies, 2010), 135–177.
17. *Case for Democracy*, 156, 172.
18. Evelyn Gordon, "The Deadly Price of Pursuing Peace," *Commentary* (January 2010), <http://www.commentarymagazine.com/article/the-deadly-price-of-pursuing-peace/>.
19. "On 10 May 1994, Yasir Arafat gave what he thought was an off-the-record talk at a mosque while visiting Johannesburg, South Africa. But a South African journalist, Bruce Whitfield of 702 Talk Radio, found a way secretly to record his (English-language) remarks. The moment was an optimistic one for the Arab-Israeli peace process, Arafat having just six days earlier returned triumphantly to Gaza; it was widely thought that the conflict was winding down. In this context, Arafat's bellicose talk in Johannesburg about a 'jihad to liberate Jerusalem,' had a major impact on Israelis, beginning a process of disillusionment that has hardly abated in the intervening years." Daniel Pipes, "[Al-Hudaybiya and] Lessons from the Prophet Muhammad's Diplomacy," *Middle East Quarterly*, September 1999, <http://www.danielpipes.org/316/al-hudaybiya-and-lessons-from-the-prophet-muhammads>. Also, "Arafat told al-Quds editor: I will make Oslo Israel's curse," February 16, 2006, <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=I0tmmd4VoVI>.
20. This is the expression of Michael Gerson, one of President George W. Bush's speechwriters.
21. *Al-Hayat al-Jadida*, December 12, 2010, as quoted by Itamar Marcus and Nan Jacques Zilberdik, "Palestinian reactions are mixed to PA aid in Carmel fire: Even if your home is stolen, you don't want it to burn," *Palwatch*, posted January 5, 2011, http://palwatch.org/main.aspx?fi=157&doc_id=4109.
22. See Yosef Kuperwasser and Asher Fredman, "The Incitement and Culture of Peace Index: Methodology and Trends," in Alan Baker, ed., *The Changing Forms of Incitement to Terror and Violence: The Need for a New International Response* (Jerusalem: Jerusalem Center for Public Affairs and Konrad Adenauer Stiftung, 2012), 55–60.

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23. Robert C. Tucker, *The Soviet Political Mind*, rev. ed. (New York: Norton, 1971), 7.
24. Yehoshafat Harkabi, "The Palestinian National Covenant" (November 1969), in Harkabi, *Palestinians and Israel*, 64.
25. Bernard Lewis, "The Palestinians and the PLO: A Historical Approach," *Commentary* 59 (January 1975): 39.
26. Harkabi, *Arab Attitudes*, 8.
27. Yehoshafat Harkabi, "Arab Positions on Zionism," in Shmuel Almog, ed., *Zionism and the Arabs* (Jerusalem: Historical Society of Israel and Zalman Shazar Center, 1983), 191.
28. Joel Fishman, "The Cold-War Origins of Contemporary Anti-Semitic Terminology," *Jerusalem Viewpoints*, No. 517, May 2–16, 2004, Jerusalem Center for Public Affairs, <http://www.jcpa.org/jl/vp517.htm>.
29. For example, the PLO charter currently is posted on the following websites: 1) PLO Refugee Affairs Department, <http://plord.ps/ar/index.php?act=Show&id=500>; 2) PLO Executive Committee, National Office for Defense of the Land and for Resistance to the Settlements, <http://plord.ps/ar/index.php?act=Show&id=500>; and 3) website of the Palestinian Mission to Germany, http://www.palaestina.org/fileadmin/Daten/Dokumente/Abkommen/PLO/palaestinensische_nationalcharta.pdf (accessed March 15, 2013).
30. According to Farouk Kaddoumi, the Palestinian leadership went through the motions of revising the charter during President Clinton's visit to Gaza but did not actually do so. "Kaddoumi said that contrary to what many people believe, the PLO Charter was never changed to recognize Israel's right to exist. 'The Palestinian national charter has not been amended until now.... It was said that some articles are no longer in effect, but they were not changed. I'm one of those who did not agree to any changes.'" Khaled Abu Toameh, "Kaddoumi: PLO Charter was never changed," *Jerusalem Post*, April 23, 2004.
31. Abu Mazen, "I Reject Israel as a Jewish State," PMW Videos, posted April 30, 2009, <http://www.youtube.com/watch?feature=endscreen&NR=1&v=2iLLeENaxK4>.
32. "The Meaning of a 'Democratic Palestinian State'" (1970), in *Palestinians and Israel*, 96.
33. Abu Iyad [Salah Khalaf] with Eric Rouleau, *My Home, My Land*, trans. Linda Butler Koseoglu (New York: Times Books, 1978), 69, as quoted by Joel Fishman, "Ten Years since Oslo: The PLO's 'People's War' Strategy and Israel's Inadequate Response," *Jerusalem Viewpoints*, No. 503, September 1–15, 2003, www.jcpa.org/jl/vp503.htm.
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35. *Case for Democracy*, 147.
36. Lewis, "Palestinians and the PLO," 45. The text of these resolutions may be found in "Appendix E, Political Programme for the Present Stage of the Palestine Liberation Organization Drawn up by the Palestinian National Council, Cairo, June 9, 1974," in Yehoshafat Harkabi, *The Palestinian Covenant and Its Meaning* (London: Valentine Mitchell, 1979), 147–148.
37. Mordechai Nisan, "The PLO and Vietnam: National Liberation Models for Palestinian Struggle," *Small Wars and Insurgencies* 4, 2 (Autumn 1993): 203, 204.
38. Abu Toameh, "Kaddoumi."
39. "Full text of Mahmoud Abbas's speech to the UN General Assembly, November 29, 2012," <http://www.timesofisrael.com/full-text-of-mahmoud-abbass-speech-to-the-un-general-assembly-november-29-2012/>.

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41. See "Introduction," *Israel, the West, Women and the Environment in Palestinian Textbooks: An Analysis of Palestinian Authority Textbooks, Grades 1–12*, IMPACT-SE Report, 2011, <http://www.impact-se.org/docs/reports/PA/PA2011.pdf>.
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46. "Palestinian National Covenant of 1968," in Harkabi, *Palestinian Covenant*, 120.
47. Harkabi, *Palestinian Covenant*, 123.
48. Ibid., "The Palestinian National Covenant" (November 1969), in Harkabi, *Palestinians and Israel*, 65.
49. For further analysis of the ethos and core values of the Palestinian curriculum, see: "Introduction," *Israel, the West, Women and the Environment in Palestinian Textbooks*, IMPACT-SE Report, 2011, p. 3, <http://www.impact-se.org/docs/reports/PA/PA2011.pdf>.
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